

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA



A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

BY

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

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A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

by

James J. Tritten

President George Bush unveiled a new national security strategy for the United States in his August 2, 1990 speech at the Aspen Institute. The concepts outlined in the President's Aspen speech were developed by official spokesmen in the following four months. The national security strategy concepts he unveiled would be **revolutionary** and have direct and dramatic impacts on NATO and the rest of the world.

Essentially, the President opened the door to a **total** reexamination of America's role in the world and its overall military capability. Rather than deploy forces at the levels maintained since World War II, the United States would maintain a much smaller active and reserve force mix capable of dealing with world-wide major contingency operations -- not a Europe-centered global war with the USSR. If forces were required to fight a major war against the Soviet Union, the U.S. assumes that there would be sufficient time to reconstitute them -- specifically, **two year's warning for a Europe-centered global war with the USSR.**

The estimated two-year warning is predicated upon the assumptions that all Soviet ground and air forces will withdraw to the homeland, that a CFE-like parity will exist from the Atlantic to the Urals, that the USSR will remain inwardly focused, and that NATO and its member states intelligence apparatus are functioning.

The major factor underlying the reexamination of America's role in the world, and basic national security strategy, is the recognition by the Congress and the Administration that the level of resources devoted to defense in the last decade cannot be sustained. Assuming a two years warning of a Europe-centered war with the USSR, the Bush Administration assumes that it can generate wholly new forces - to rebuild or "reconstitute" them if necessary. Specifically, current forces deemed unnecessary, will be disbanded, **not** put into the reserves.

The New York Times covered the new strategy on August 2, 1990. According to the initial report in the New York Times, the force structure numbers that were discussed were:

- Army: 12 active, 2 reconstitutable reserve, 6 other reserve divisions (currently 18 active & 10 reserve)
- Air Force: 25 active & reserve tactical air wings (currently 36)
- Navy: 11-12 aircraft carriers (currently 14)
- Marine Corps: 150,000 personnel (currently 196,000)

Late December 1990 reports in the media have used slightly higher numbers, reflective of budgetary negotiations. Force levels discussed in those reports included some differences: a Navy of around 450 ships (down from 538) including 11-12 aircraft carriers and a Marine Corps of 160,000 personnel.

Originally termed the "base force," a new force structure advocated by Chairman of the JCS, General Colin Powell, will be organized into four basic military components: Strategic nuclear

offensive and defensive; Atlantic; Pacific; and a Contingency Response Force; and four supporting capabilities: Transportation, Space, Reconstitution, and R&D.

The Strategic Force would include those offensive forces that survive the START-II process, where numbers like 4500 and 3000 warheads have been discussed openly during the past year. Reducing the offensive threat dramatically to such lower numbers suggests revisiting the suitability of strategic defenses. It is likely that strategic defenses will continue as an R&D program. General Powell stated in December that the U.S. remains committed to a triad of offensive forces, but that we would probably increase reliance on sea-based systems.

The Atlantic and Pacific Forces appear to be headed for both reductions and restructuring. The Atlantic force will include residual forces remaining in Europe, those forward-deployed to Europe, and the continental U.S.-based reinforcing force. This force would be responsible for Europe, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia. General Powell stated in December that the residual Atlantic Force retained in Europe would consist of a heavy Army component (Corps strength) with supporting air forces. The New York Times report discussed 100,000 - 125,000 military personnel remaining in Europe as part of the Chairman's revised force structure, although a 50,000 - 100,000 level was openly discussed at the September conference of the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

U.S. forces in Europe cannot be changed without considering commitments made to allies and the planned employment of American resources in combined operations under NATO command. The July 1990 NATO London Declaration stated that the Alliance too was preparing a new "military strategy moving away from 'forward defense'. . ."

Army General John R. Galvin, NATO's SACEUR, recently told the Defense Planning Committee that he envisages a change in his primary combat mission from flexible response and forward defense to crisis response. The centerpiece of this capability would be a standing Rapid Reaction Corps centered about a multinational corps and the existing ACE Mobile Forces. Should these standing forces not be able to support political decision making, then additional forces will be mobilized and regenerated or "reconstituted."

Air Force General George Lee Butler, the former J-5, stated in a September address at the National Press Club ". . .that the U.S. could undertake a prudent, phased series of steps to reduce modestly our force presence in Korea, as well as Japan and elsewhere." The Pacific Force will include those residual forces remaining in Korea and Japan, those forward-deployed in the theater, and reinforcing forces located in the continental U.S. General Powell stated in December that "the bulk of American Army and Air Force power in the Pacific would be as reinforcements . . . using Hawaii, Alaska, and the continental



United States as springboards." It is not clear if forces assigned to the Pacific will have a dual commitment to the European theater in a revitalized "swing strategy" but it should be noted that Japan-based U.S. forces have participated in Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM.

Perhaps the most dramatic innovation of the Chairman's recommended force structure is the creation of a Contingency Force based in the continental United States. The Contingency Force will apparently be shaped by the need to provide an overseas presence and response to regional contingencies with heavy armored forces if needed - **not** to return quickly to Europe.

Today's crises are extremely dangerous due to the proliferation of advanced weaponry and weapons of mass destruction and the demonstrated willingness of Third World nations to use them. Conflict in the Third World is increasingly destructive and lethal. General Butler described planning for regional contingencies as planning for "graduated deterrence response." U.S. crisis response forces will provide presence with the ability to reinforce with sufficient forces to prevent a potentially major crisis from escalating or to resolve favorably less demanding conflicts.

General Butler provided the most detailed breakdown of the Contingency Force. The first stage of a Contingency Force would consist of: (1) Army light & airborne divisions, (2) Marine Corps Expeditionary Brigades, (3) Special Operations Forces, and

(4) selected Air Force units. Ground units would fly to a crisis area, much as they did to Saudi Arabia. This initial component of the Contingency Force would be buttressed as necessary by: (1) carrier forces, and (2) amphibious forces. The third tier of the Contingency Force appears to be heavier forces with the capability for long-term sustainability.

The current Middle East crisis demonstrates that the U.S. can muster sufficient assets to meet a major contingency where there were no forces in being. Indeed, General Powell drew a parallel in a December speech between Operation DESERT SHIELD and the President's new strategy. Operation DESERT SHIELD also seems to demonstrate that such a force does not require basing overseas, such as in Europe.

Once DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM after action reports are written, analysts will try to answer the question what systems appeared to make a difference in the political and military outcome. Systems that did not make a major contribution to this contingency operation will need to be reevaluated for upgrading or cancellation and replacement. Under the new strategy to reconstitute capabilities useful in a Europe-centered war with the USSR, there will be no need to retain systems that do not have a dual use in the Contingency Force.

The issues raised in the President's Aspen speech are numerous, complex, and require discussion. Some of the more important

include: how likely is the new strategy to take hold; how do we define our new goals and objectives for both program and war planning; what is the lasting impact of our current contingency operations in the Middle East; what are the new requirements for the intelligence community, for decision-making, investment strategy, personnel and organizations, for technology, and the transition period?

There appears to be four main problem areas in which solutions portend success for the President's dream. The first is that everything depends upon the responsible and good behavior of the Soviet Union. It may not be desirable to have your fundamental national security strategy so dependent upon the behavior of the once "evil empire" but, for the new strategy to work, the Soviets must return to their homeland, remain inwardly focused, and continue the serious reductions in military capability they have started. Additional drawdowns in naval and strategic nuclear systems must follow soon.

The second critical area demands that the intelligence community must be able to surmount the new challenges. If funding for intelligence follows defense downward, then the reconstitution portion of the new strategy is bankrupt. The intelligence community should move into spheres they have traditionally underemphasized, such as the Third World and economics. They will also have significantly increased burdens demanded by the monitoring and verification of compliance of arms control agreements. All

of this **is** possible if decision-makers recognize this crucial underpinning of the new strategy.

The third area that can undermine a successful transition to this new world will be the international behavior of allies and the U.S. Congress. Clearly, none of this is going to happen without Congress onboard. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney's efforts to have his department articulate the new strategy are designed to ensure that the DoD is ahead of Congress and that the new policies are adopted.

The final critical success factor is the ability of private industry to deliver. What is envisaged is **not** the same as industrial mobilization. We need to both save our defense industrial base under **very** new conditions, **and** simultaneously reduce defense spending. How can we do this when the Administration is not willing to address the need for a national industrial policy?

Major changes in the way we do business are required to retain both our technological position in the world and the personnel necessary to meet newly defined defense needs. By withdrawing forces from overseas and promising to reconstitute forces within two years and return, the United States will have fundamentally changed its international political-military posture.

A major implication of the two-year big war warning is that American programming strategy will shift its focus to the threats



presented in other areas of the world. Until now, the unstated relationship of the threat to programmed forces was, generally, that U.S. forces would meet the challenge of the most demanding threat, the USSR, and assume that they could also cope with lesser contingencies. That basic assumption was generally not entirely true and now will be essentially reversed: forces will be acquired to meet the challenges of the more likely, less demanding, threats assuming that they are useful against the more unlikely but greater threat posed by a Soviet Union that decides to rearm.

The operations analysis and political science communities will need to cooperate like they never have before. The need for analysis of the old, massive, short-term (14-day) mobilization has diminished. The military operations analysis community needs to reorient itself to measurements of reconstitution where the timelines are measures in months and years and not days or weeks.

New planning scenarios need to be created and wargames need to be conducted to help us study the lessons of wars and campaigns yet to be fought. An artificial history can be written of alternative futures so that the military can better advise their political leadership on the most suitable courses of action for decisions they should make today. Gaming, naturally, is no substitute for solid analysis. Gaming, however, can provide new insight and supplements more traditional methods of dealing with

alternative futures. Perhaps the time has come to even jointly game with the USSR the deescalation of crises.

Strategic warning, decision making, non-NATO battlefields (ashore and at sea), manpower and personnel planning, resource allocation, test and evaluation, combat models, and gaming and simulation are all areas that will need fundamental readjustment due to the new international security environment. MORSS has Working Groups in all of these areas and we hope to address all of these areas at the 59th MORSS in West Point.

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